4: Liu K-4 (no date) 1944 AE3 Sino-Tibetan
Border Peoples AE3

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476 For domestic animals they all have pigs, cows, or sheep. The common variety is the yellow cow, and the P'ien-niu 犏牛, which is a hybrid of yellow cow and yak. The latter are kept as draft animals. During the spring or early summer, when the crops are coming out, the people send their cows up to the mountains in order to save the young crops from being trodden or destroyed by the cows, and at the same time to find grazing food, located between the agricultural and the forest zones. They have a certain number of pastures in definite valleys. The people of one valley or several valleys all cooperate to gather their animals into one grazing ground, and leave it to one family to be responsible in taking care of all the animals sent there. The pasture is open to grazing animals from May, and is closed by the end of September. This is called one season. Fees for the care of each animal in the grazing ground per season vary from palce to place and year to year. The fee for each animal for this past summer was 1.2 tou of corn or wheat. One wonders if this grazing cooperative is not the earliest cooperative in China.

II. ROCK CAVE COOPERATION

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224 Because of the limited amount of cultivable land, and the unreliable harvests caused by the great variability in rainfall, agriculture alone is not enough for their livelihood. They have to depend upon the products of the high mountains for part of their income. The chief products of the high mountains are animal products and medicinal herbs. Therefore, the two important avocations for the people are hunting and herb digging. Both types of work mean a difficult and lonely life in the wild and wet wilderness of the high mountains. One has to drink out of the streams, feed on wild vegetables or animals. At night, one has to seek for shelter under rock cliffs or in caves. Through long years of hard experience, definite places for night dwelling are marked out and named. They are called Rock Nest 岩窩, Long Cliff Nest 長崖窩, Ch'iang Ho Cave 羌活洞, etc. Everybody who goes to the mountains knows where to go for the night. But there are certain traditions or customs about it. That is, when you leave the place you must leave it clean and everything in order. By everything I mean the crude equipment people use for cooking, such as a large piece of rock slab for making dough, a wooden hook which is used to hang the teapot with from the overhanging roof, and three pieces of rocks for the support of the cooking pot. Usually people also gather a heap of dry fuel inside ready for emergency use for later comers. Another good custom is that you can leave your own things inside and go off roaming in the mountains hunting or digging. Even if there are new-comers, there is not only no stealing, but instead they are very hospitable and share each others trophies. The spirit is quite different from that of the plains people. They are neither selfish nor calculating in their dealings with one another. The poor people are usually more generous than the rich. This is true everywhere, and it is true in the mountains as well as in the grassland.

Mewu

236 [476] The sheep are sheared once a year in May or June. Neighbors help each other in this task without charge. It takes an average of two days to shear the herd of one family. A wether gives 1 chin of wool annually, a ewe, 1/2 chin. A chin of fleece costs 20 to 50 cents. At the time of my visit the demand for wool was so great that the highest price was paid. A sheepskin costs $0.60 to $1. 237 435 However, skins of unborn lambs cost $2 to $4. A sheep gut is sold for $0.20 to $0.30; in He-tso, the nearest large town, the price goes up to $0.40 when it is resold. 262 More mutton than yak meat is eaten. Lambs are eaten only if they have died of some disease. The Fantzu do not drink sheep milk, but they use it for butter if they do not have enough yak milk.

231 /28/ The sheep often suffer from paralysis of both forelegs, and many die of this disease. Most of the animals die of starvation in February or March, especially if there has been much snow during [476] the winter. If a family loses all its animals, everybody helps out by giving them others. The tent nomads do not often keep goats, but the sedentary Fantzu often do, and they also drink goat's milk.

Every family has at least one horse. The Mewu-Fantzu have a small breed of horses that measures about 130 centimeters at the withers. These Tibetan ponies are somewhat smaller and lighter than the Mongolian ponies or those from the provinces of Ch'inghai and Kansu. They are closer to the tarpan (Equus gmelini) than the Przewalski type (1). These horses have a great deal of endurance

1. Compare Hermanns 3), page 164 ff.

and are especially adapted for use in mountainous terrain. They 232 have hard hoofs which are not shoed in the steppes. Good stallions 135 are selected for breeding, the rest are castrated at four years. These horses live an average of 10 years; the men break them in at 3 years. The average price of a riding horse is $40 to $50; the highest price is $100. No horses are imported, but horse traders come from T'ao-chou and He-tso, and the Mewu-Fantzu sell them horses. Mules are not used by the tent nomads; asses cannot stand the high altitude.

492 The simple horse bridles of leather with brass mountings are made and sold by the Chinese, likewise the iron snaffles and the stirrups which can be of iron or brass. The Mewu-Fantzu use Hungarian saddles /bocksattel/ the wooden frames of which are made by the sedentary Tebu-Fantzu on the northern slopes of the

craft. The women know how to spin wool, but cannot weave. The only craft with which a woman can earn money is that of hairdresser. Only the men can sew, and they make all the clothing and shoes. They use Chinese cotton thread and crude needles imported from Szechuan. The only men's craft besides tailoring is saddle-making. Often, however, men earn money with their oxen as drivers of pack animals. The tents are made mostly by lamas. 462 463

Basketry is not highly developed. The large willow baskets used for gathering yak dung are sometimes made at home, but are generally imported from the neighboring sedentary Fantzu. Shallow baskets are used for storing special provisions, for example, mushrooms, and these are obtained from the Tebu-Fantzu. 285

The livestock of the nomads constitutes their entire wealth. They have practically no money. In livestock there are great differences between rich and poor. It often happens that a family or an entire tent community suddenly becomes impoverished, if a great many animals starve after a deep snowfall, or if many die of an epidemic. If a family loses all its animals, friends and neighbors help them out. There is very little begging. In the nomad settlements one never sees beggars; a few may be seen around the monasteries where they get a little tsamba on festive occasions or at burials. 331 476

Taxation is still very low: $0.50 to $1, according to the size of the family, must be paid annually to the tribal chief. The Chinese police collect it from him twice a year, in the second and eighth month. No monetary tax need be paid to the lamaseries, /36/ but each family must contribute food for the general temple festivals and to those temples where they have relatives among the lamas. Lamas also come to the tent camps very often to collect butter for the lamaseries, and this is always freely given. 651

Trade is entirely in the hands of Mohammedans and Chinese, chiefly the former. There are quite a number of things that are purchased with money; farther in the interior of the grasslands there is more barter. During the first years of the Republic silver dollars came to be used in place of unminted silver (taels). Smaller units of exchange are the tsuan (?) and copper coins. A tsuan is the equivalent of 49 copper coins; 4 tsuan are 36 cents; 11 1/2 tsuan are 1 silver dollar. In 1936 there was no paper money among the Fantzu, but it will soon replace silver which is being recalled by Chinese officials. [441] [463] [583] 436

The nomads sell the following to Mohammedans and Chinese: sheep, horses and yaks, sheep guts, horse and yak hides, horse and 439 237